

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, May 22, 1895, with transcript

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL Beinn Bhreagh, C. B.

Tuesday, May 22, 1895. Dear May:

Its pretty late now — but I will write a few lines — if only to show you that I have not forgotten you — but am thinking of you constantly — and Elsie and Daisy too.

There was a grand bunt on the south side of the mountain this morning. Eight men formed a line and systematically explored the woods starting at boundary dividing line fence — and coming gradually towards the Point.

Systematic exploration at last revealed the run-away — then she was chased up the mountain so that the men could gradually close in on her. The poor lamb — tired out — was soon caught. The mother ran further — headed up-hill for a wire fence and leaped it at one bound — an extraordinary performance. This shows that no fence will keep her in. We have therefore resorted to the expedient of tying together one fore-leg and one hind-leg with a rope long enough to give her considerable freedom of motion and short enough — we hope — to prevent her from indulging in further acrobatic performances.

The lamb is a beauty — jet-black — a female — with four splendid nipples of equal size — the largest I have yet seen upon a lamb. The mother (No. 256) yields milk out of all six nipples.

Spent some time in laboratory today. New apparatus ready for trial. Tested the point Prof. Langley was skeptical about. Results show that former experiments are reliable.

There is no doubt at all about the fact — that increased 2 weight (at the circumference) increased the lift with equal velocities — when the lifting power is derived from propellers

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acting at an angle to the horizon. Our experiments today were only tentative — to test how the new apparatus works — and will not be included in series for publication. Think new apparatus undoubtedly better than old.

Wish I could write to you about what I read — not only for the sake of telling you — but also to enable me to remember it myself. A thing that you repeat you make your own. Talking or writing about what you read — causes the information to become part of your own personal knowledge. It becomes assimilated with what you know already — and remain your own forever. Whereas without this conscious repetition from memory — the facts fly from you and are soon forgotten — unless they lie within your own special field of investigation.

I have missed “Nature” — in Mexico — but as now reaping the benefit of a quiet read of back numbers. Read Nature of May 2nd today with great interest. The articles I remember as of special interest relate to following subjects: Books of the Dead (used by the Egyptians B.C. 1500) and now for the first time translated from hieroglyphical descriptions on papyrus — Vitality of seeds — Argon and Helium two new elements. Argon discovered by Lord Baleigh in the atmosphere and Helium (“the sun”) an element the presence of which was discovered in the Sun by Spectroscopic analysis — but which 3 has only now been discovered to exist upon earth. Effect of Electricity and magnetism on the development of embryos — Tuberculosis from food — and Geological History of Australia. Oh! dear I should like to write of these things but daylight appears.

Your loving husband, Alec. P. S. Received your cablegram about convent accommodations at Halifax. No letter from France yet. It is about time now for some news. A.G.B.